



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of the General Counsel  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20250-1400

October 4, 2019

**Delivered via Electronic Mail**

Hart Wood  
American Oversight  
1030 15th Street NW  
Suite B255  
Washington, DC 20005  
[foia@americanoversight.org](mailto:foia@americanoversight.org)

**Re: Interim Response for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request No. 2019  
DA-06466-F**

Dear Mr. Wood:

This is an interim response to the above-referenced FOIA request submitted to the USDA's Departmental FOIA Office (DFO). The request sought:

All email communications (including emails, email attachments, and calendar invitations) regardless of subject matter sent by (a) any of the employees listed in Column A [of table included in the request letter] to (b) any of the individuals or entities listed in Column B [of table included in the request letter], including but not limited to at the email addresses and domains specified[.]

The request further identified various responsiveness time periods, as follows:

- “for communications with all entities in column B except Tim Murtaugh, Linda McMahon, Stefan Passantino, and Nick Ayers from June 1, 2018 to the date the search is conducted.”
- “for communications with Nick Ayers outside of his tenure at the White House from February 19, 2019 to the date the search is conducted.”
- “for communications with Stefan Passantino outside of his tenure at The White House from August 31, 2019 to the date the search is conducted.”
- “for communications with Tim Murtaugh outside of his tenure at USDA from February 23, 2019, to the date the search is conducted.”
- “for communications with Linda McMahon outside of her tenure at SBA from April 13, 2019, to the date the search is conducted.”

Your request is being processed under the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

A search for responsive records was conducted by the Office of the General Counsel's (OGC) telecommunications provider, the Client Experience Center (CEC). The CEC provides comprehensive, fee-for-service information technology (IT) associated operations, security, and

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technical support services to USDA end users, as well as implements and manages enterprise IT solutions for users Department-wide. The Outlook accounts associated with Linda McMahon, Stefan Passantino, and Nick Ayers were searched for responsive communications within the respectively responsive time periods. No responsive records were identified as a result of these searches.

The DFO continues processing the remainder of your request.

You have the right to appeal the DFO's determinations. Due to the need to issue more than one release of records in order to fully resolve your request, your appeal rights for all records released in response to this request will be provided to you in our final response letter.

You may seek dispute resolution services from the DFO's FOIA Public Liaison, Ms. Camille Aponte. Ms. Aponte may be contacted by telephone at 202-690-5260, or electronically at [Camille.Aponte@usda.gov](mailto:Camille.Aponte@usda.gov) or [USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov](mailto:USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov).

You also have the option to seek assistance from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). Please visit <https://ogis.archives.gov/mediation-program/request-assistance.htm> for information about how to request OGIS assistance in relation to a FOIA request.

If you have any questions regarding the processing of this request, please contact Ms. Camille Aponte at (202) 694-5260, or electronically at [Camille.Aponte@usda.gov](mailto:Camille.Aponte@usda.gov) or [USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov](mailto:USDAFOIA@ocio.usda.gov).

For additional information regarding USDA FOIA regulations and processes, please refer to the information available online at [www.dm.usda.gov/foia](http://www.dm.usda.gov/foia).

The DFO appreciates your patience as we continue processing the remainder of your FOIA request.

Sincerely,

ALEXIS GRAVES

Digitally signed by ALEXIS  
GRAVES  
Date: 2019.10.04 13:28:38 -04'00'

Alexis R. Graves  
Departmental FOIA Officer  
Office of the General Counsel